



THE MOVIES' MOST COLORFUL WESTERN STAR—

10¢

CHARLES STARRETT *as*

The DURANGO KID

in this issue:
DAN BRAND in another
exciting adventure —

"TREES OF DEATH!"

No. 5





PROTECTOR of the weak, defender of the right, champion of justice, the Durango Kid cautiously explores a spooky old house, while his young companion stands open-mouthed behind him.

Charles Starrett as THE DURANGO KID. June-July, 1950. Vol. 1, No. 5. Published bi-monthly by Magazine Enterprises, Inc., at 11 Park Place, New York 7, N. Y. Publisher, Vincent Sullivan; Editor, Raymond C. Krank. Application for second-class entry is pending at the post office at New York, N. Y. Application for additional entry is pending at the post office at St. Louis, Mo. Subscription in U.S.A., \$1.00 for 12 issues. Entire contents copyrighted 1950 by Magazine Enterprises, Inc. No similarity between any of the names, characters, persons and/or institutions, other than the title character, appearing in this magazine and those of any living or dead person or institution is intended and any such similarity that may exist is purely coincidental. Printed in the U.S.A.



GOLD! THE WILD LURE OF THE PRICELESS YELLOW DUST, THE PROMISE OF EASY FORTUNES! IT TRANSFORMED MEN INTO CLAWING BEASTS - IT TORE MEN AWAY FROM THEIR HOMES - IT TURNED THE GOLD-LADEN COLORADO MOUNTAINS INTO A NO-MAN'S LAND OF HOT GREED WHERE THE PASSWORD WAS MURDER! AND IT THREATENED TO END THE STELLAR CAREER OF **THE DURANGO KID...**!

A LONE MINER'S CAMP IN THE HIGH HILLS OF COLORADO...



I'VE WORKED SO HARD... ALL THESE YEARS... ALONE...



THE DURANGO KID



THOSE CROOKS/... WHAT'LL I DO, WHAT'LL I DO?... SHH-I HEAR HORSES COMING! THEY- THEY'RE COMING BACK TO FINISH THEIR DIRTY WORK!



BUT THIS TIME THEY'LL FIND ME READY FOR THEM! THEY MAY GET ME IN THE END, BUT I'LL TAKE ONE OR TWO OF THEM ALONG WITH ME!



HERE THEY COME, DOWN ON THAT ROAD BEND. I'LL GET THE FIRST ONE WHO POKES HIS NOSE OUT!



MISSED!



IT'S A FIGHT TO A FINISH, NOW. THERE - I CAN SEE THE HAT OF ONE OF THEM. NOW, JUST AS SOON AS HE STEPS OUT FROM BEHIND THAT ROCK...



GOTCHA! WHAT'S THE BIG IDEA OF GUNNING FOR PEACEFUL TRAVELERS?

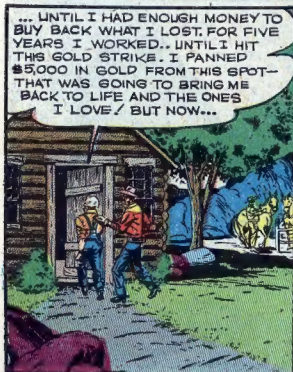


STEVE BRAND!

DOC STRANGE! WELL, I'LL BE -! AFTER ALL, THESE YEARS, NOW WHAT WAS THE IDEA OF SHOOTING AT MULEY AND ME?



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID

THE DAYS FOLLOWED EACH OTHER QUICKLY. NOTHING LIKE HARD WORK TO MAKE TIME RACE BY!



FINISHED! WE'VE DIRECTED THE WATER RIGHT UP TO OUR MINE. WE POUR OUR DIGGINGS INTO THE SCREENING BOX, WHERE THE WATER CAN WASHES OUT THE GOLD. THE SECOND BOX WILL CATCH THE SLUDGE AND SCREEN THAT, TOO—JUST TO MAKE SURE WE DON'T MISS ANYTHING.



THIS WAY, I CAN MINE FIFTY TIMES AS FAST. YOU CAN THROW THAT LITTLE DISHPAN AWAY, DOC—WE'RE WORKING WITH A WHEEL-BARROW, NOW!



AND HYAR COMES THE FUST LOAD—YIPPEE! WE'RE AGOIN' TUH BE RICH!

YVAL, NOW—AIN'T ME AN' MUH BOYS GOIN' TUH BE INTERESTED IN THET DEAL ABOUT A WEEK FROM NOW!



ONE WEEK LATER!

\$10,000 WORTH OF GOLD DUST IN ONE WEEK! TREMENDOUS! I CAN LIVE AGAIN!

Wow!



I KIN JUST SEE THET SILVER TRIMMED MEXICAN SADDLE I'M AGOIN' TUH BUY! GONNA RIDE ALL OVER MUH OWN DOGGONE RANCH—BOSS O' THUH WHOLE SHEBANG! HOW ABOUT THET, STEVIE-BOY?



DIDJA HEAR ME, STEVIE? I SAID—HEY WHAR YOU GOIN'?

I'M LEAVING, MULEY. MY WORK IS DONE HERE— I'M TURNING OVER MY STAKE TO DOC AND I WANT YOU TO STAY ON HERE WITH HIM!



STEVE, I DON'T UNDERSTAND!

I'M SORRY, BOYS— THERE'S JUST NO ROOM IN MY LIFE FOR A LOT OF GOLD. I'M SORT OF ITCHING TO HIT THE TRAIL AGAIN!

STEVIE, WE BEEN RIDIN' BUDDIES FER YEARS. YUH CAIN'T (GULP!) BREAK THET UP!



THE DURANGO KID

GOODBYE, FELLOWS.
MULEY—CAN I HAVE A
LITTLE PRIVATE TALK WITH
YOU BEFORE I TAKE OFF?



BUCK UP, PARTNER—CAN'T
YOU SEE I'M JUST ACTING?
I'VE GOT TO FIND SOME WAY
TO GET STEVE BRAND OUT
OF HERE SO I CAN
RE-APPEAR AS THE
**DURANGO
KID!**



I FOUND THESE TRACKS THIS
MORNING. THEY MATCH THE
TRACKS MADE BY THOSE
HOMBRES WHO STOLE DOC'S
FIRST HAUL. THEY'VE BEEN
SNOOPING AGAIN AND THERE'S
GOING TO BE TROUBLE!



IT'S HIGH TIME THE
DURANGO KID RODE
AGAIN— TO RESTORE
LAW AND ORDER TO
THIS TERRITORY.
SO LONG, MULEY.

SO LONG, PARDNER!
GOSH, YUH SHORE
HAD ME SCARED
THERE. I'LL STICK
WITH DOC ALL
RIGHT.



LATER THAT DAY...

HELLO, DOC!
WHO'S YORE
PAL?

NO! NO! NO!
NOT
AGAIN!



YUH ORNERY GOOD-FER-
NUTHIN', SNAKE LIVERED,
UGLY—

BAM!



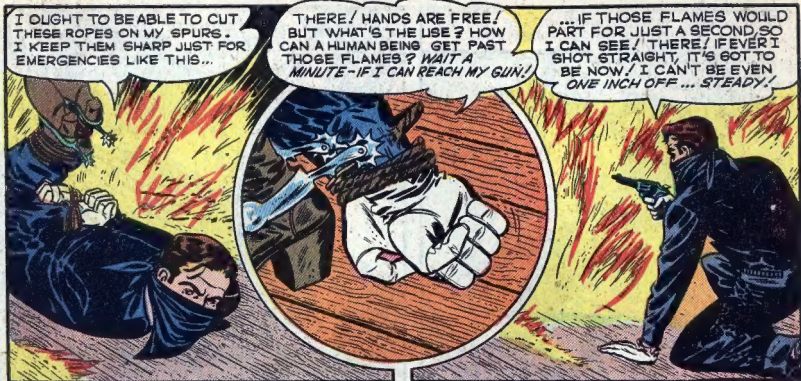
GOOD WORK, SCARFACE! TIE 'EM BOTH UP
AND THROW 'EM IN THUH CABIN. SNUFFY,
CLIMB THUH ROOF AN' STAND LOOKOUT TILL
WE'RE THUHROUGH— THERE'S ANOTHER GUY
AROUND AND WE WANT TO BE READY
FER HIM!



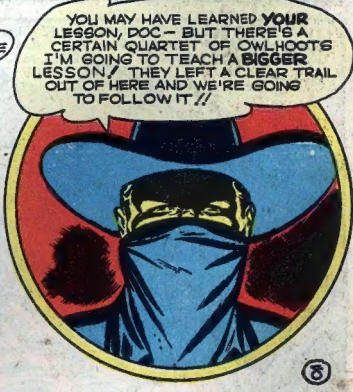
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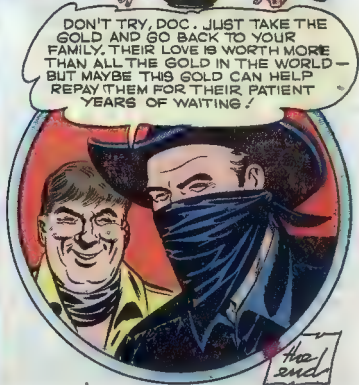
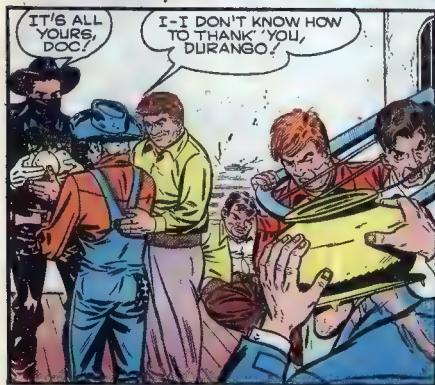
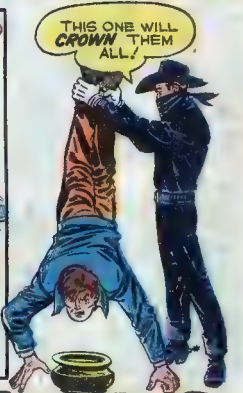
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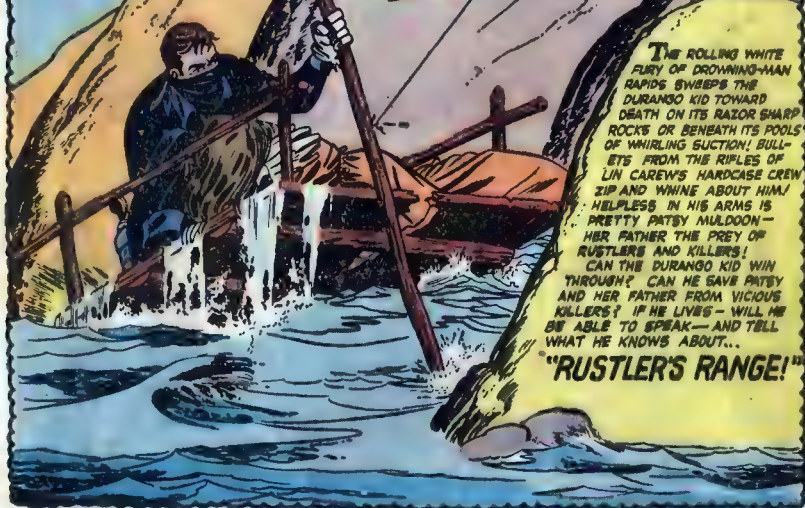
A QUICK TATTOO OF THREE SHOTS...!



THE DURANGO KID

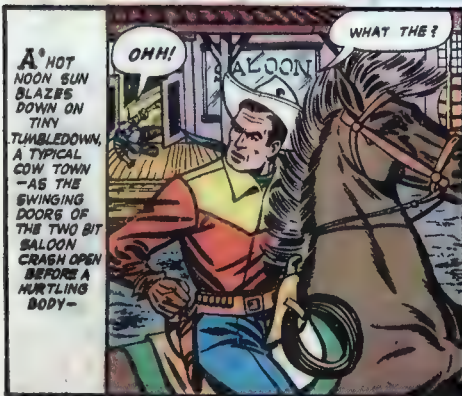


The DURANGO KID



THE ROLLING WHITE
FURY OF DROWNING-MAN
RAPIDS SWEEPS THE
DURANGO KID TOWARD
DEATH ON ITS RAZOR SHARP
ROCKS OR BENEATH ITS POOLS
OF WHIRLING SUCTION! BUL-
LETS FROM THE RIFLES OF
LIN CAREW'S HARD-CLASE CREW
ZIP AND WHINE ABOUT HIM!
HELPLESS IN HIS ARMS IS
PRETTY PATSY MULDOON—
HER FATHER THE PREY OF
RUSTLERS AND KILLERS!
CAN THE DURANGO KID WIN
THROUGH? CAN HE SAVE PATSY
AND HER FATHER FROM VICIOUS
KILLERS? IF HE LIVES—WILL HE
BE ABLE TO SPEAK—AND TELL
WHAT HE KNOWS ABOUT...

"RUSTLER'S RANGE!"



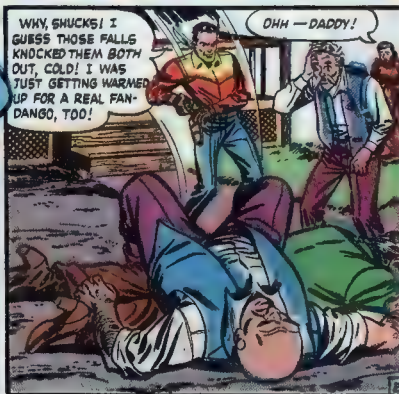
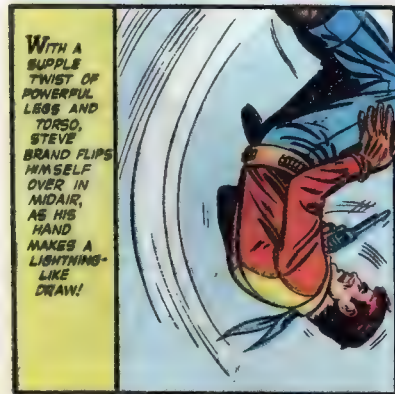
A HOT
NOON SUN
BLAZES DOWN
ON TINY
TUMBLEDOWN,
A TYPICAL
COW TOWN
—AS THE
SWINGING
DOORS OF
THE TWO BIT
SALOON
CRASH OPEN
BEFORE A
HURLING
BODY—



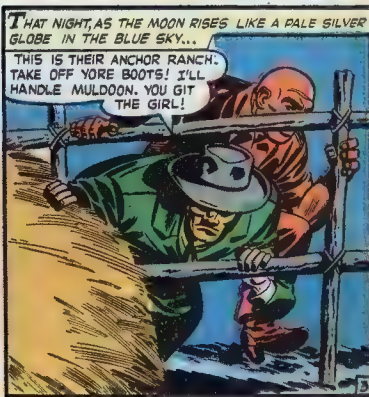
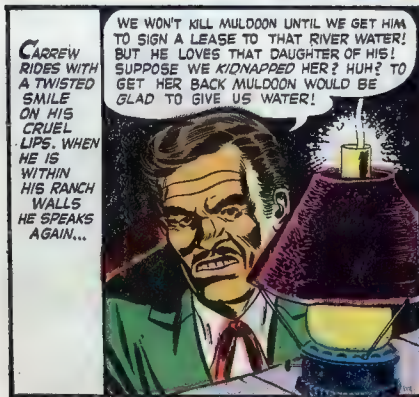
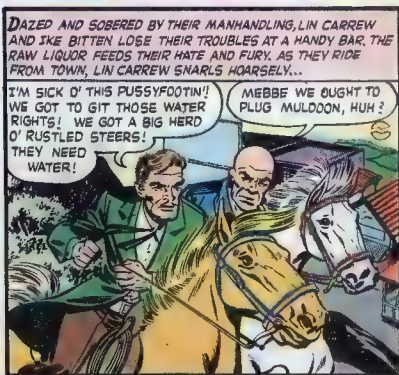
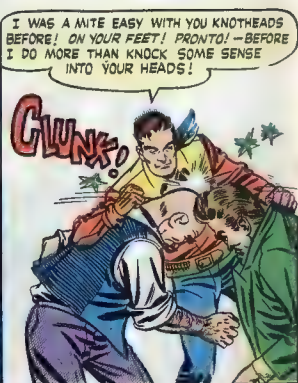
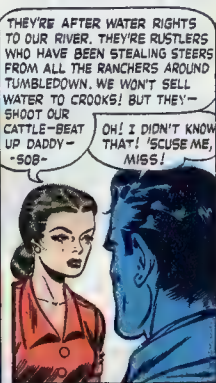
CALL ME A RUSTLER,
WILL YA? I GOT ME A
MIND TO PUT MY BRAND
ON YORE HIDE FOR
ONCE AN' ALL!

NO!
NO!

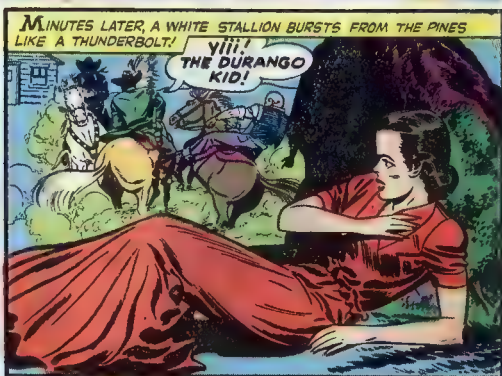
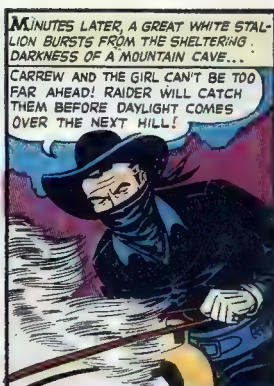
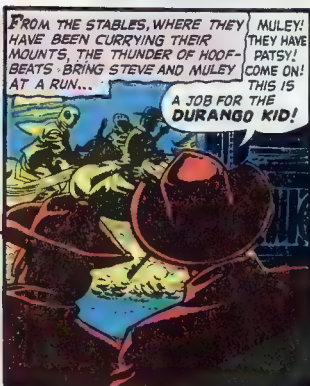
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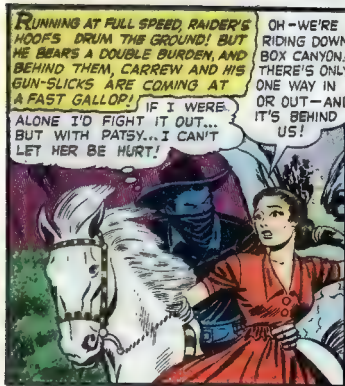
THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



RUNNING AT FULL SPEED, RAIDER'S HOOF'S DRUM THE GROUND! BUT HE BEARS A DOUBLE BURDEN, AND BEHIND THEM, CARREW AND HIS GUN-SLICKS ARE COMING AT A FAST GALLOP!

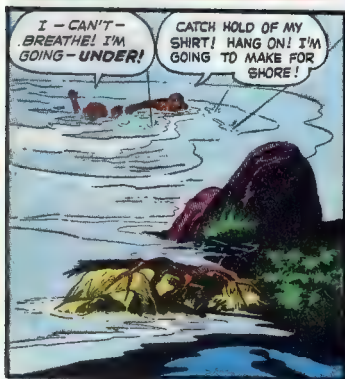
IF I WERE ALONE I'D FIGHT IT OUT... BUT WITH PATSY...I CAN'T LET HER BE HURT!

OH -WE'RE RIDING DOWN BOX CANYON! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY IN OR OUT-AND IT'S BEHIND US!

TRAPPED BY HALF A DOZEN GUN-SLICKS - HANDICAPPED BY A FRIGHTENED GIRL - THE DURANGO KID SLIPS FREE-FROM STIRRUPS AND CLIMBS HIGH TO THE TOP OF A CANYON CLIFF...

THERE'S ONLY ONE THING WE CAN DO-AND THAT IS-

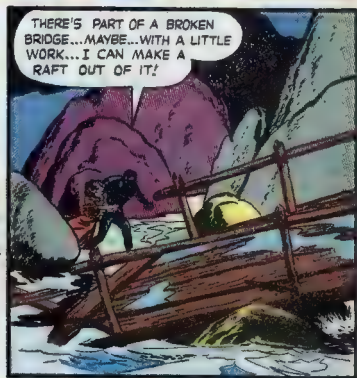
TO - JUMP!!



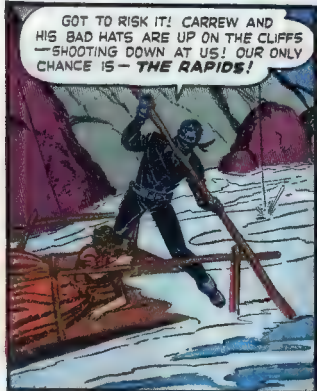
I - CAN'T - BREATHE! I'M GOING - UNDER!

CATCH HOLD OF MY SHIRT! HANG ON! I'M GOING TO MAKE FOR SHORE!

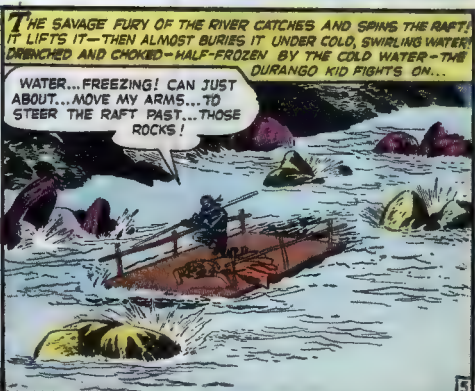
BUFFETED BY THE POUNDING RAPIDS, SWUNG BY FIERCE CURRENTS, THE DURANGO KID STRUGGLES TO A SMALL SANDY SHORELINE.



THERE'S PART OF A BROKEN BRIDGE...MAYBE...WITH A LITTLE WORK...I CAN MAKE A RAFT OUT OF IT!



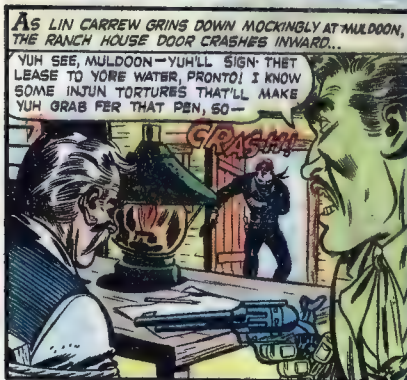
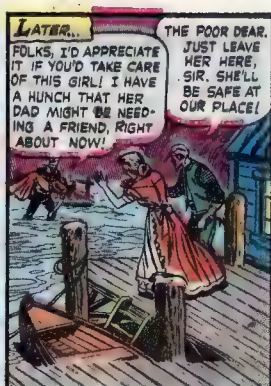
GOT TO RISK IT! CARREW AND HIS BAD HATS ARE UP ON THE CLIFFS - SHOOTING DOWN AT US! OUR ONLY CHANCE IS - THE RAPIDS!



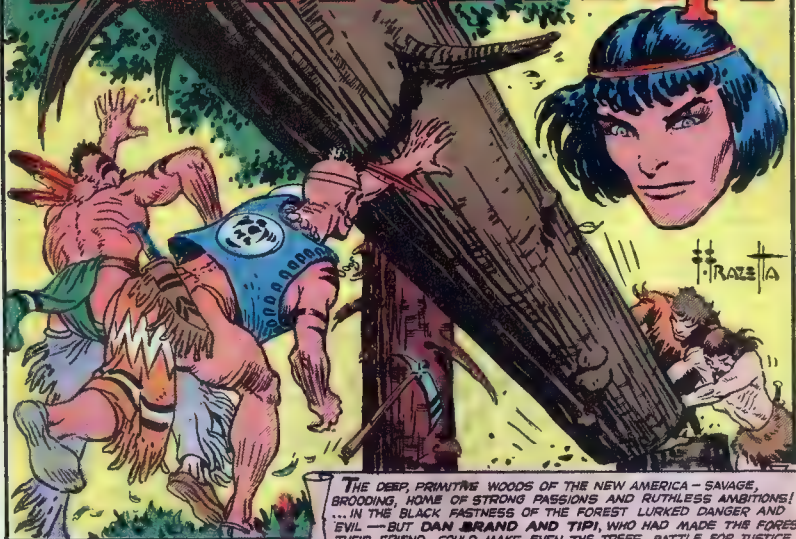
THE SAVAGE FURY OF THE RIVER CATCHES AND SPINS THE RAFT! IT LIFTS IT - THEN ALMOST BURIES IT UNDER COLD, SWIRLING WATER! DRENCHED AND CHOKED - HALF-FROZEN BY THE COLD WATER - THE DURANGO KID FIGHTS ON...

WATER...FREEZING! CAN JUST ABOUT...MOVE MY ARMS...TO STEER THE RAFT PAST...THOSE ROCKS!

THE DURANGO KID



Dan Brand and Tipi



THE DEEP, PRIMITIVE WOODS OF THE NEW AMERICA - SAVAGE, BROODING, HOME OF STRONG PASSIONS AND RUTHLESS AMBITIONS! ...IN THE BLACK FASTNESS OF THE FOREST LURKED DANGER AND EVIL - BUT DAN BRAND AND TIFI, WHO HAD MADE THE FOREST THEIR FRIEND, COULD MAKE EVEN THE TREES BATTLE FOR JUSTICE IN - "TREES OF DEATH!"

IN THE DEEP PENNSYLVANIA WOODS...

WE'RE MAKING HISTORY HERE, DAN BRAND. THIS TIMBER IS GOING TO BE FLOATED DOWN THE MONONGHELA RIVER TO HELP BUILD A GREAT CITY AROUND FORT PITT!

YOU SHOULD BE PROUD TO BE DOING SUCH AN IMPORTANT JOB, MACSHANE!

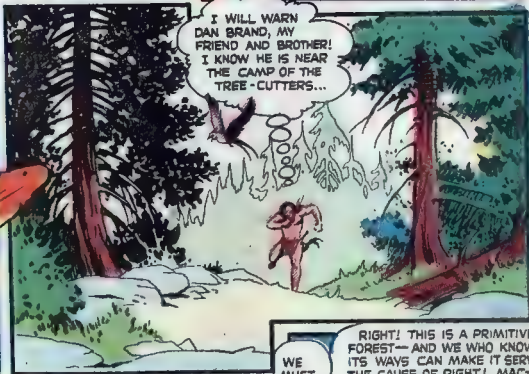
I AM PROUD, DAN - BUT WORRIED! THIS JOB HAS ITS RISKS. WE HAVE ENEMIES, DAN - POWERFUL ENEMIES! AND THEY MAY STRIKE SOON....!

SOONER THAN YOU THINK, MACSHANE! IN ANOTHER PART OF THE FOREST...

IT IS BECAUSE I LOVE THE RED MAN AND HIS WAYS THAT I WARN YOU OF THIS GREAT DANGER! THE WHITE MEN WHO CUT DOWN THE TREES WILL SOON LEAVE YOU WITHOUT FORESTS TO HUNT IN! THEY WILL DRIVE YOU OFF THE LAND OF YOUR FATHERS!



THE DURANGO KID



NEXT MORNING, NEAR THE LUMBER CAMP, FLEET ARROW TELLS HIS TALE...



A SHORT TIME LATER...

BRACK, EN? I WAS AFRAID OF THAT. HE'S THE OWNER OF A RIVAL LUMBERING COMPANY AND HE'LL STOP AT NOTHING—NOT EVEN MASSACRE! WELL, WE'VE GOT GUNS—WE CAN STOP 'EM!

NO, MAC-SHANE—YOUR GUNS WON'T BE ENOUGH! THERE ARE THOUSANDS OF THEM AND ONLY A HUNDRED OF YOU—AND THEY TOO ARE ARMED!



RIGHT! THIS IS A PRIMITIVE FOREST—AND WE WHO KNOW ITS WAYS CAN MAKE IT SERVE THE CAUSE OF RIGHT! MAC-SHANE, TELL YOUR MEN TO GRAB THEIR AXES AND FOLLOW ME...



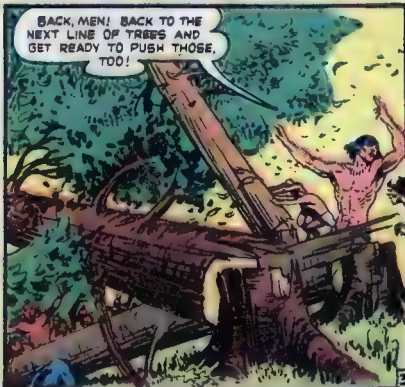
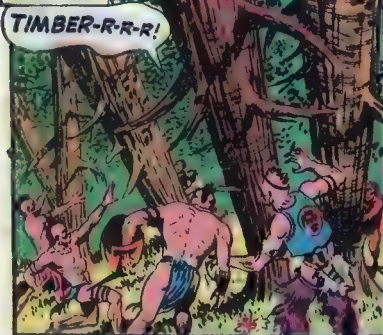
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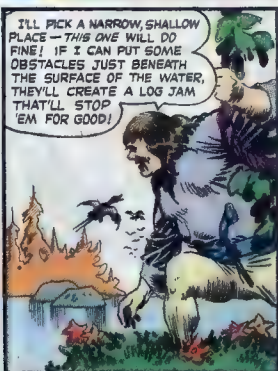
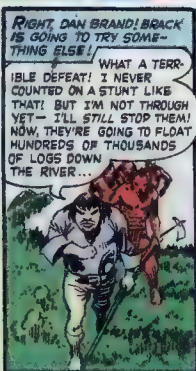
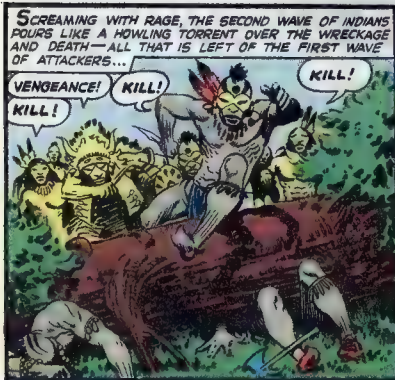
LATER! THE ATTACKERS COME ON! A BLOOD-CURDLING WAR-CRY SPLITS THE WOODS AS A THOUSAND INDIANS SUDDENLY EMERGE AS THOUGH OUT OF THE GROUND...



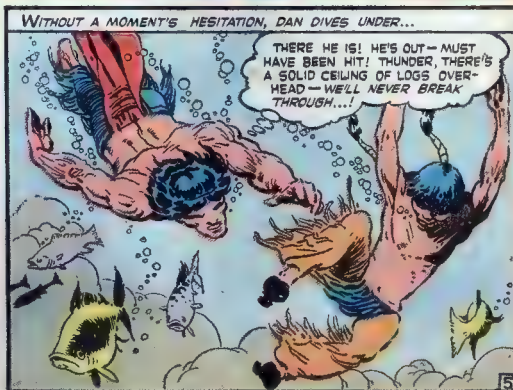
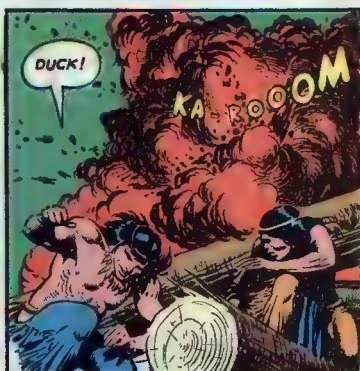
BUT FROM THE OTHER SIDE COMES ANOTHER SHOUT, A NEW WAR-CRY, STRANGE TO THE EARS OF THE ATTACKERS...



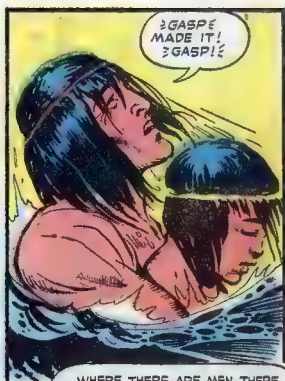
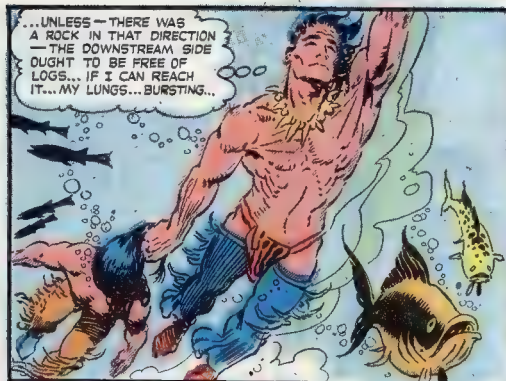
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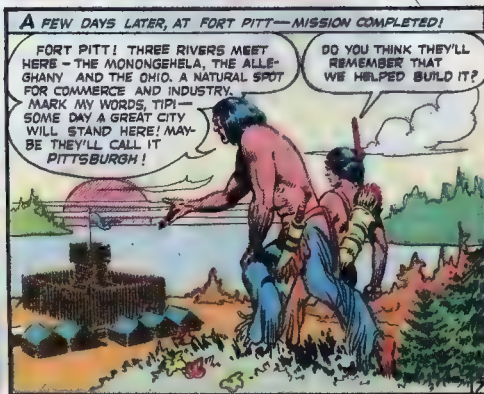
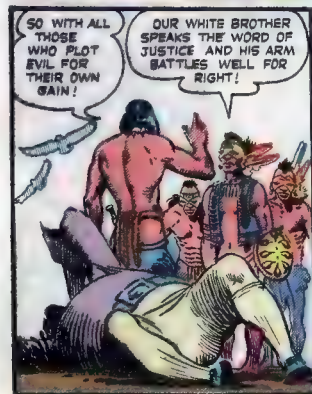
THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



Count your bullets!

JOHNNY Lannon came to his feet in a whirling spin as the bullet sprayed sand and gravel into his face. When his spin ended, he was running away from the cool creek where he had been drinking, back into the shelter of the junipers and dwarf pines. He drew up, breathing swiftly, a hand on the neck of the mule that carried the gold his father had dug so painstakingly from the side of Gunsight Gulch.

"It's those two hombres who passed me this afternoon, about the time I hit the crooked forks," he whispered to the mule through set teeth. "I kind of reckoned they gave me a long look!"

They saw the gold sacks, he told himself. They know I'm carrying dust and nuggets from the diggings down to the Wells-Fargo agent at San Lomas!

His father had sent him this way, along the long slopes of the Sierras, because he himself could not go. His father had said, grimacing against the pain of his broken leg, "I'd go myself, Johnny. There's a fortune in gold in those bags. But I can't move ten feet on this banged-up leg! You'll have to do it, boy. Go the long way—'round by the east slope. You won't meet anybody—I hope!"

But he had met somebody, those two men with the shellbelts crossed over their lean waists, with the rifles snugged down into saddle sheaths, and the dark sullen look to their eyes and faces that Johnny had seen in the faces of men whom the law hunted. And Johnny did not have to be told. It was one of those men who had thrown a .44-40 rifle slug across two hundred yards of mountain slope at him as he lay drinking in the creek.

Johnny caught the reins and led the mule swiftly under the interlocked branches of fir tree and cedar. A frown came and sat on his face as he half-ran. He would be no match for two gun-hardened outlaws. He had no rifle, only a worn Colt .38 stuck in among the gold sacks—for, food, in case his supplies ran short, or he were holed up by an unseasonable snowfall. Johnny's lips twisted in a bitter grin. He had no more than a handful of bullets. Just enough to fill the cham-

bers of the Colt! Those men behind him—who were probably now spurring their saddlers at breakneck speed down the far drift of the creekside hill to get at him—had gleaming shellbelts studded with expensive bullets.

For three hundred yards, he walked behind the ambling mule, dragging a strip of hide after him along the ground. The hide's weight rubbed out his footprints and the hoofmarks of the mule. It was an old Indian trick to hide the signs of travel from an enemy. In the woods, it would hold up the two—for a little while. But Johnny knew that sooner or later, they would begin to ride in a wide circle. They would find him.

Johnny broke into a trot. The mule came shambling after him, gold-filled bags bouncing to each rump-shifting stride. Faintly, drifting with the wind that blew up through the little valley, came the voice of a man, whooping discovery.

"They've found the tracks. They'll come fast, now. They'll be galloping. I can only run."

Johnny stared at the sacks. His teeth grated as he clamped his jaws shut. "Mebbe they can gun me down—but if I could only hide the gold—so they couldn't find it except by sheer luck—"

As he ran, his eyes searched the blackish shadows of the pines. There was no hiding place here, in this wildness of trees and shrubs, where the sun threw a dappled grey-ness all around. If he dug a hole and covered it, the men behind him would see the fresh dirt, the marks of the small shovel strapped to the pack-saddle on the mule's back. If he thrust it into a clump of brush, their keen eyes would search it out.

Johnny shook his head despairingly, glancing behind him at the plump bags. They were too big to hide here. He realized that, just as the idea struck him.

His fingers shook with excitement as they fumbled over the tie-strings that held the gold-sacks on the saddle. He loosened them and lowered them to the ground. Then, one by one, he carried them to the middle of the trail and set them there, forming a little pile.

THE DURANGO KID

"They'll figure it's a trap," he told himself. "They'll figure even a fifteen-year-old boy wouldn't be fool enough to leave a year's worth of back-breakin' work plumb out in the middle of a forest trail for them to grab holt of and ride off with!"

Johnny ran to the mule and whispered into a lop-ear, that lifted and fell as if acknowledging the urgent words that were murmured into it. Then Johnny grasped the Colt and withdrew it from the saddleholster, slapped the mule on its flank and watched it amble off, straight ahead along the trail.

Johnny moved into a sprawling clump of evergreens, and lowered himself flat on the ground. He spun the cylinder of the Colt. Five brass-jacketed bullets blinked at him. With tight lips, Johnny removed one of the precious bullets from his pocket and inserted it in the empty chamber and spun it. Now there were six bullets in the Colt. Johnny whispered, "Most folks carry an empty cylinder for the hammer to rest on, so's it won't go off and fire by accident. Mebbe those bad hats riding down on me won't figure me for a full gun."

He could hear them now, coming through the forest trails, the drumming hoofs of their horses pounding their rhythm through his chest and belly and legs as he lay on the ground. Johnny tensed and raised his Colt.

They saw the piled sacks even as they came into the little clearing. They sawed back on their reins, making their saddlers slide in the pine-needled forest floor. They were brutal-looking men with thick lips and tiny, pig-eyes. One of them wore two guns strapped low. Johnny heard him addressed as Slick when the other man spoke.

"What yuh think, Slick?" asked the man who wore one gun.

Slick showed his teeth in a grin. "Might be the young 'un spooked at thought of tanglin' with us. He left the gold as a sort of peace offerin'."

The other man shook his head. "Don't like it, Slick. Kids 'round these parts don't spook that easy! I reckon it's a trap of some sort. Huh! Mebbe he loaded them sacks with dirt, and left 'em here to slow us down."

Slick swung off his horse and walked toward the bags. His dark eyes searched the ground all around it. He saw the bootmarks where Johnny had walked away from the sacks and to the mule. He grinned and put out a hand and hefted a bag. He opened it, and whooped.

"It's gold, all right—an' plenty of it! I—"

Johnny never knew whether Slick had seen sunlight reflected on the barrel of the Colt he held, or whether the outlaw's keen eyes had seen his boot tracks. But Slick was

whirling toward him, tossing the sack aside, both hands diving for the curved butts of his sixguns. They were lifting out of the holsters when Johnny got to his knees, holding his gun steady, and dropped the hammer.

It was hard to miss at fifteen feet. Johnny's first bullet caught the gunman in the chest. His second took him in the leg. The man was turning, slumping, as his partner's gun blasted from the far side of the clearing.

Johnny threw himself sideways. He felt the bullet brush his knee. Then he was flat on the ground, grasping soft dirt with his left hand, wriggling snakewise along the ground, behind the shelter of a rock. Bullets bounced off rocks and ground, all around him. The gunman had full shellbelts. Johnny only had four shells left.

From behind the shelter of a rock he drew a bead on the gunman and fired. He fired again. He missed both shots. Now the gunman saw his shelter and came for him, running behind his horse, pushing the animal ahead of him. All Johnny could see of the man was his booted legs, and the black crown of his sombrero. Desperate, Johnny stood up. He ran, bent over, toward the man and the horse.

Suddenly the horse was shying in fright, rearing up, kicking at the air with sharp hooves. The man cried out, seeing Johnny, and his gun came up, and steadied.

Johnny fired instinctively, and called out in his chagrin. He had missed at ten feet! The man laughed in delight.

"Reckon yore toes are plumb curled up into knots right now, ain't they, kid?" he called out, walking slowly forward, gun aimed at Johnny's middle. "It won't hurt, kid. Yuh ain't got no more bullets. I know that. But yuh kind of done me a favor, gettin' Slick. Now the gold is all mine. I don't have to divide with him. Just fer that favor, I'm goin' to make it sudden, so yuh won't suffer none."

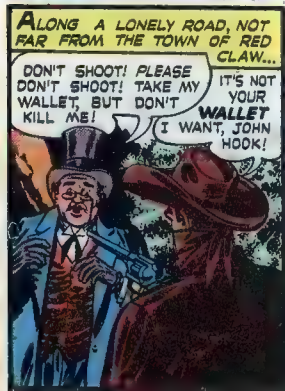
The owlhoot was within four feet of Johnny when Johnny lifted his gun and dropped the hammer on the sixth bullet. The man's eyes widened in shocked surprise. Then he was crumpling on the ground, limply. A spasm kicked his legs into convulsive movement for an instant. Then he lay still.

Johnny sat down suddenly. He began to shake. His teeth clicked together. A cold sweat came out of his forehead and made it moist and clammy. Numbly, Johnny lifted his arm and dragged his sleeve across it.

"I'm alive. Alive. They're dead! I killed two outlaws!"

Johnny drew a deep breath. He stood up. It was a long journey, down to San Lomas. He had better get started.

THE END

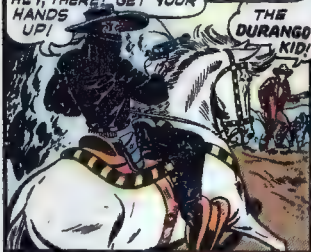


THE DURANGO KID

BUT-A MOMENT LATER, A FAMILIAR FIGURE, FOREVER SCOURING THE PLAINS IN PURSUIT OF JUSTICE, IS DRAWN TO THE SPOT BY THE SOUND OF THE GUN-BLAST...

THAT SHOOTING CAME FROM HERE... HEY, THERE! GET YOUR HANDS UP!

THE DURANGO KID!



YOU WON'T GET ME!

HELP! HELP ME!

OH-OH, HE'S STILL ALIVE! I'D BETTER TAKE CARE OF HIM-THOUGH IT'S A SHAME TO LET THE KILLER GET AWAY!



WHO DID IT? QUICK, TELL ME!

IT WAS... IT WAS... AH-H-H...



DEAD! I WONDER WHO HE WAS? MAYBE IN HIS POCKETS...



GIT YORE PAWS HIGH, DURANGO! SO YUH TURNED OWLHOOT, HUH? KILLIN' AN' ROBBIN'! THET HOMBRE YUH JIST VENTILATED WUZ JOHN HOOK, THUH TOWN BANKER-AN' I'M RUNNIN' YUH IN FER MURDER!



I GUESS THERE'S SHORE AIN'T, NO USE TRYING DURANGO! I TO CONVINCE NAILED YUH YOU I DIDN'T FLAT-FOOTED. DO IT, SHERIFF! NOW COME A- LONG NICE AN' PEACEFUL-LIKE!



I SURE HATE TO DO THIS, SHERIFF! I RECKON YOU'RE JUST DOING YOUR DUTY AS YOU SEE IT...



...BUT I DON'T AIM TO SWING FOR A MURDER I DIDN'T DO!

GOOF!



I'LL JUST TAKE THE SAME EXIT THE KILLER DID—THROUGH THESE STRAWBERRY BUSHES! HERE, RAIDER! UP, BOY!



THE DURANGO KID ESCAPES TO HIS HIDEOUT WHERE HE CHANGES QUICKLY TO STEVE BRAND, ROVING COWBOY, AND INFORMS HIS SIDEKICK, MULEY, WHAT HAS HAPPENED. THEN, THE TWO FRIENDS RIDE INTO RED CLAW...



I'M GLAD WE MOVED RAIDER'S HIDEOUT CLOSER TO TOWN, MULEY—WE MAY NEED HIM IN A HURRY!

I DUNNO! IT SHORE AIN'T GOIN' TUH BE NO CINCH, RIDIN' AS DURANGO.



...SEE WHUT I MEAN? I SEE. BUT THERE'S GOT TO BE A WAY TO CONVINCE THE SHERIFF THAT DURANGO DIDN'T DO IT—AND TO FIND THE REAL KILLER TOO!



I'LL DOUBLE THAT REWARD IF DURANGO IS BROUGHT IN **DEAD!**

THAT'S JEB HARDON, HE WUZ HOOK'S BUSINESS PARTNER IN THUH BANK!



THET HARDON'S SHORE ITCHIN' FER YORE...WHUT THUH—? NOW WHAR IN THUNDERATION DID STEVE GO? HE WUZ HERE A MINUTE AGO!



HOOKE WAS MY BEST PAL AND I'M SPARING NOTHING TO BRING THAT KILLER, DURANGO, TO JUSTICE! I SAY LET'S FORM A POSSE RIGHT NOW AND COMB THIS WHOLE TERRITORY FOR THE POLECAT!



SHORE HOPE STEVIE DON'T GIT NO NOTION TUH DO DURANGO STUFF RIGHT NOW! MIGHTY ON-HEALTHY ROUND HYAR!

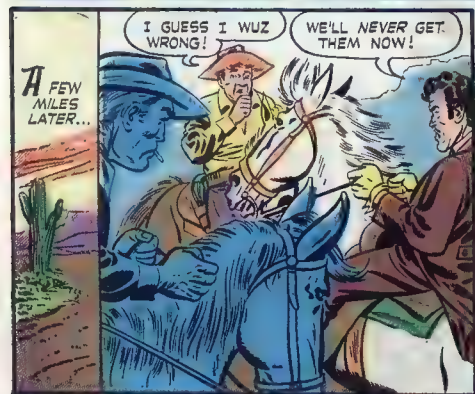
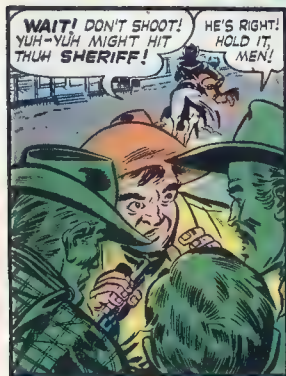
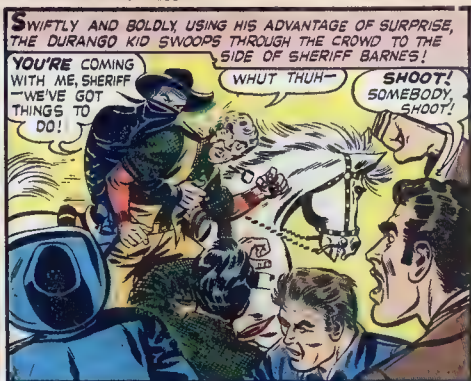


HEY, YOU—WHUT'S THUH MATTER? AIN'T YUH COMIN' ON THE POSSE? YOU SIDIN' WITH DURANGO OR SOMEPIN'?

NO—ER, YEAH...I MEAN, SHORE, I'M COMIN'! (GULP!)



THE DURANGO KID



BUT—WHEN THE POSSE RETURNS TO RED CLAW, THEY FIND A SURPRISE WAITING FOR THEM...

HOWDY, MEN—WHUT' TOOK YEZ SO LONG?

THE DURANGO KID!

OMI-GOSH!



YUP, I TURNED THE TABLES ON THIS HOMBRE —HE AIN'T AS TOUGH AS HE'S TALKED UP TO BE!



BEFORE WE STRING HIM UP, LET'S SEE WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE! OFF WITH THAT MASK!

I CAN'T LOOK! THIS IS IT—THIS IS THUH END!

SO THAT'S WHAT HE LOOKS LIKE!

HE'S A RUMMY-LOOKIN' CRITTER!

LOOKIT THUH MUSTACHE 'N BEARD ON THUH VARMINT!



BEARD?...MUSTACHE?... MUSTACHE?... MUSTACHE!

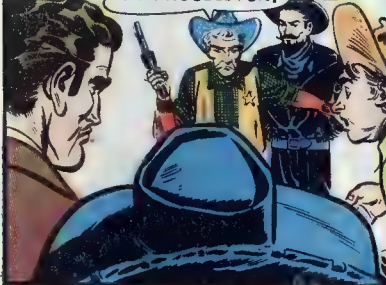


LET'S LYNCH THE SKUNK RIGHT NOW!

GIT YORE HANDS OFF MUH PRISONER, HARDON!



AIN'T NOBODY GOIN' THUH LAY A FINGER ON HIM TILL HE'S HAD A FAIR AN' SQUAR' TRIAL! I DECLAR' THUH TRIAL TUH BE TOMORROW AT THUH SCENE OF THUH CRIME—AN', SINCE YUH'RE SO HOT TUH SEE HIM SWING, HARDON, I APPOINT YUH **PROSECUTOR!**



FIRST HE KIDNAPS TH' SHERIFF AN' THEN HE LETS HISSSELF BE TOOK! HE SPROUTS UP WITH A MUSTACHE AN' GOATEE AN' WINKS AT ME LIKE EVERYTHING'S OKAY—AN' THEY'RE GOIN' THUH STRING HIM UP TOMORROW SURE AS SHOOTIN' AN'—AW, I'M HORNSWOGGLED, SKEDADDLED AN' JIST PLUMB BEFOOZLED!



NEXT MORNING, AT THE TRIAL, JEB HARDON IS CONCLUDING HIS PROSECUTION.

...AND WHEN THE SHERIFF CAUGHT HIM REDHANDED, DURANGO JUMPED OFF THIS LEDGE INTO THOSE STRAWBERRY BUSHES. YOU'LL SEE HIS FOOTPRINTS DOWN THERE AND YOU'LL FIND STRAWBERRY STAINS ON HIS PANTS!



EVERYTHING SHOWS HE'S GUILTY! HE KILLED MY PARTNER JOHN HOOK IN ORDER TO ROB HIM AND HE DESERVES TO BE HUNG BY THE NECK UNTIL DEAD! I REST MY CASE!



NOW I'LL TELL MY STORY. WHEN DURANGO KIDNAPPED ME YESTIDDAY, HE BRUNG ME HERE AN' MADE ME LIGSEN TUM HIS ALIBI. HE SAYS HE SKEERED OFF THE **REAL** KILLER BEFORE I GOT HERE. THUH KILLER **ALSO** JUMPED OFF THET LEDGE...



YEP, DURANGO SHOWED ME **OTHER** FOOTPRINTS DOWN THERE!

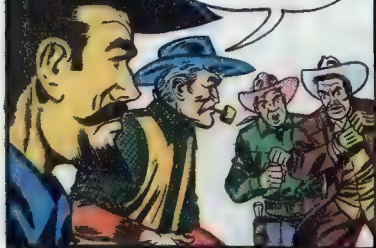


RIGHT, SHERIFF—THAR'S **TWO** SETS UV PRINTS DOWN HERE—DURANGO'S AN' SOMEBODY ELSE'S!

DURANGO PROVED TUH ME HE DIDN'T KILL HOOK. HE LET ME BRING HIM INTUH TOWN SO WE COULD FIND THE **REAL** KILLER. TELL 'EM WHUT YUH KNOW, DURANGO!



MEN, YOU'LL FIND THOSE **OTHER** FOOTPRINTS ~ WILL FIT HARDON'S SHOES—AND IF YOU LOOK CLOSELY, YOU'LL FIND STRAWBERRY STAINS ON THE BACK OF **HIS** PANTS! HE KILLED HIS BEST FRIEND TO GET FULL CONTROL OF THE BANK! THE GAME'S UP, HARDON!

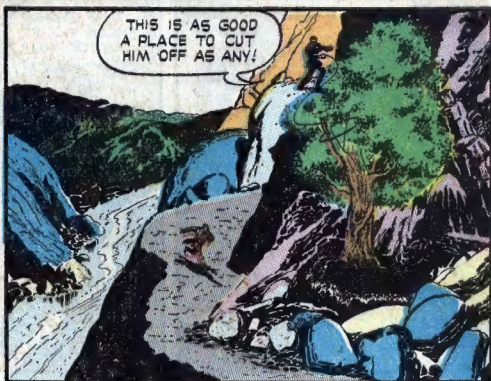


WATCH OUT!

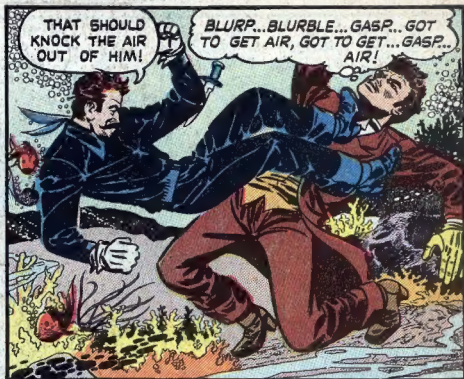
ALL RIGHT! I DID IT! BUT, TRY TO GET ME!



THE DURANGO KID



THE DURANGO KID



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STRAIGHT ARROW

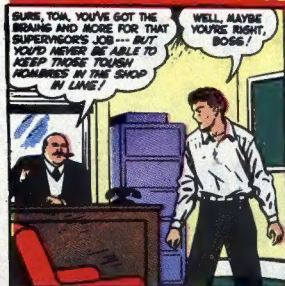
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